



## Indoor Air Quality Tools for Schools Program

Indoor Air Quality (IAQ)

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### NEWS AND EVENTS

- **Register today for the 2010 National Asthma Forum June 17-18, 2010**, in Washington, D.C. Take action to deliver high-quality, comprehensive asthma care in your community! Join asthma leaders from across the nation to share the most effective strategies for managing asthma and achieving positive health outcomes.
- **NEW Report:** Working With Schools to Improve Pediatric Asthma Management. Read this compelling new report published in the journal *Pediatric Asthma, Allergy & Immunology*. [View the report](#).
- **Resources Available:** EPA is accepting grant applications to help manage the National Environmental Education Training Program over the next five years. Applications will be accepted until July 26th, 2010. The cooperative agreement will be awarded to develop resources for teachers and other education professionals to support teaching about environmental issues. [Read more information](#) about the application process for the National Environmental Training Program.

### BE AN ASTHMA CHAMPION DURING ASTHMA AWARENESS MONTH

With [Asthma Awareness Month](#) approaching in May, it's the perfect time to [start planning an activity](#) to raise awareness about asthma and its environmental triggers at school and in the community. With 1 in 10 school-aged children in the United States suffering from asthma, educating students and their families about [how they can control their symptoms](#) to lead active, healthy lives is more important than ever. Schools with comprehensive IAQ management programs are already supporting children's health by reducing exposure to [asthma triggers](#), but to achieve lasting community change, everyone must be involved. Schools are the hearts of communities; the places where the seeds of change are planted. By cultivating awareness and action on asthma, you can help asthma-friendly environments to bloom community-wide. What can you do? Help parents, school staff and students understand how to implement changes to manage asthma triggers at home, and broadcast what you are doing to help comprehensively manage asthma

### OTHER ASTHMA RESOURCES:

[EPA Asthma Program](#)[AsthmaCommunityNetwork.org](#)[American Lung Association \(ALA\) Open Airways for Schools](#)[Asthma and Allergy Network Mothers of Asthmatics \(AANMA\)](#)[Centers for Disease Control and Prevention \(CDC\) Coordinated School Health Program](#)

### UPCOMING WEBINAR! MANAGING ASTHMA IN THE SCHOOL ENVIRONMENT

Thursday, May 13th, 2010, 1:00 - 2:30 PM ET

Renowned experts at creating safe and healthy school environments, Drs. Robert Geller and Leslie Rubin, Director and Co-Director of Emory Southeast Pediatric Environmental Health Specialty Unit, will share best practices to manage asthma in the school environment. Don't miss this chance to learn from these safe and healthy school experts! [Register today](#).

at school. Tell parents how your efforts are supporting their children's health and performance. In short: show the community how you are leading by example.

Students and staff from *IAQ Tools for Schools* Faculty School District Charlotte-Mecklenburg participated in a community event to increase awareness about the importance of healthy air.

- **Empower School Staff.** [Incorporate asthma lessons](#) into math, science, language arts and health courses. Communicate to maintenance and custodial staff how important their work is to students' health: have students with asthma sign a "thank you" card for them.
- **Get Students On Board.** Host a poster contest offering prizes to the students that best highlight the following themes: what can trigger asthma, how to take your medicine, how indoor air quality affects asthma, and more. Encourage students with asthma to work with their parents and doctors to identify and manage their asthma triggers by creating an [Asthma Action Plan](#).
- **Motivate Parents.** Send parents newsletters with updates about IAQ program activities, information about the link between IAQ and student performance, and tips for managing asthma triggers at home. Call upon parents to share educational material at local PTA/PTO meetings and events, and ask for a parent to volunteer as a parent liaison for your IAQ team.

By hosting an [Asthma Awareness Month](#) event for your school or community, you can help empower students and their families to lead healthy, active lives.

## JOIN THE DISCUSSION

The Schools IAQ Connector Listserv makes it easy to connect directly with your peers to share information and communicate over e-mail and on the Web. **Join the listserv today** by sending a blank e-mail message to [schools\\_iaq\\_connector-subscribe@lists.epa.gov](mailto:schools_iaq_connector-subscribe@lists.epa.gov). Then, check your e-mail inbox for your confirmation and membership details.

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## BECOME AN *IAQ TOOLS FOR SCHOOLS* AWARD WINNER

The National Great Start and National Leadership Awards are merit-based awards for schools or school districts that are in the beginning phases of their IAQ management programs. **Applications are accepted year-round. [Apply today!](#)**

## CHECKLIST FOR MANAGING ASTHMA IN SCHOOLS

- ✓ **Develop an School Asthma Management Program** outlining policies on the use of inhalers and other medication as well as emergency procedures for asthma attacks.
- ✓ **Obtain Asthma Action Plans from students** outlining their triggers, medications and emergency contact information.
- ✓ **Plan an Asthma Awareness Event in May** using the [Asthma Awareness Month Event Planning Kit](#) to plan an [event in your school](#). Share your activities to inspire others nationwide on [AsthmaCommunityNetwork.org](#) and social media channels such as Facebook and Twitter.
- ✓ **Use the *IAQ Tools for Schools* Action Kit** to identify, solve and prevent indoor air quality problems that may exacerbate asthma symptoms. For example, create or reinforce existing no-smoking policies on school grounds.
- ✓ **Reduce children's exposure to diesel exhaust.** Learn more about the [Clean School Bus USA](#) program and its resources to help schools eliminate unnecessary bus idling and reduce the amount of air pollution created by diesel school buses.
- ✓ **Provide school-based asthma education programs** by contacting local chapters of the [American Lung Association](#) or your state's Department of Health.
- ✓ **Communicate with parents about your efforts** and point them to resources they can use to effectively manage their child's asthma and reduce exposure to asthma triggers in their homes.

## INSPIRING ACTION: IAQ DESIGN CHALLENGE SCHOOL DISTRICT UPDATE - RECOVERY SCHOOL DISTRICT OF LOUISIANA

Since participating in the [IAQ Tools for Schools National Symposium](#) in January 2010, the Louisiana Recovery School District (RSD) of New Orleans is continuing to take action to promote IAQ management in the district. The district has identified 10 pilot study schools and conducted their first round of IAQ walkthroughs in early March, and plans to have

over 25 schools enrolled in extensive IAQ management programs by October 2010. RSD has been seeking and receiving mentorship from their EPA Region 6 representatives and IAQ Tools for Schools Faculty from Katy Independent School District (TX) and North East Independent School District (TX) to grow their program and sustain their results. RSD has also reached out to community organizations and leaders to gain additional mentorship and guidance, including the Louisiana Chapter of the American Lung Association, Tulane University and their local Congressman, Representative Ahn “Joseph” Cao. These new partners are playing active roles to participate in RSD’s Air Team trainings, help conduct facility walk-throughs and provide other support.

To promote a culture of open communication, Tiffany Delcour, the district’s IAQ Coordinator, has started sending a weekly update to her IAQ management team highlighting successes, progress and areas for improvement throughout the district.

Check back for more updates from all five of our [IAQ Design Challenge School Districts](#) as they work to develop effective, sustainable IAQ management programs in their districts!

## INSIGHT INTO EXCELLENCE: CHARLOTTE-MECKLENBURG SCHOOLS

In 1999, leaders in Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools (CMS), an urban district in North Carolina, realized the heavy burden of asthma on their community and their school system when a North Carolina Department of Health and Human Services survey revealed that 10 percent of CMS students had asthma and 18 percent of CMS students self-reported asthma symptoms. Determined to take action, CMS and Mecklenburg County Health Department jointly applied for and received funding through a cooperative agreement from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) Division of Adolescent and School Health (DASH) to develop and implement an asthma management program, the CMS Asthma Education Program (AEP). CMS wanted to support students and their families to manage asthma effectively so they could live active, healthy lives unencumbered by asthma symptoms at home and school.

Utilizing the CDC’s six strategies for addressing asthma within a coordinated school health program, CMS developed a plan for addressing the immediate needs of students with asthma in their district. The first step was to identify all students with current asthma. Nurses talked with students and parents to determine if students had ever been diagnosed with asthma. CMS used this data to identify and prioritize schools with the greatest needs for increased school health presence, and developed asthma-focused school health teams for these campuses. As the staff were put into action, they worked at the school level to identify high-risk students and work with them and their parents to conduct targeted asthma interventions, including developing Asthma Action/Emergency Plans, providing asthma education, and providing asthma nurse case management. At the district level, leaders introduced a sustainable, cost-free program to provide to students access to respiratory therapists.

Next, CMS acted to educate and raise awareness about asthma among school staff to effect long-term institutional changes. On the students’ side, school nurses provided targeted asthma education to students with asthma to increase their knowledge and self-management skills using the American Lung Association’s Open Airways program. Finally, CMS continually communicated with parents to make asthma a more visible issue in the school community, to help them understand what they were doing and why they were doing it, and to discover what they could do to get involved. For example, CMS offers no-cost Parent Asthma Education classes through its CMS Parent University.

By approaching the asthma issue comprehensively, CMS was able to implement an asthma prevention program as part of their district’s effective and enduring indoor air quality management program. The benefits will extend well into the future.

### HAVE YOUR QUESTIONS ANSWERED!

Is there a topic you want to see covered in an *IAQ Tools for Schools* Update? Need more information or have a quick question? Do you have suggestions for a Webinar, an Update feature, or are you simply curious about an IAQ topic and would like more information? If so, send us an e-mail at [IAQTfSConnector@cadmusgroup.com](mailto:IAQTfSConnector@cadmusgroup.com).

Share YOUR news and events! Send us information to share with the school IAQ community. It could be featured in the next Update. E-mail your news to [IAQTfSConnector@cadmusgroup.com](mailto:IAQTfSConnector@cadmusgroup.com).

The *IAQ Tools for Schools* Program is a comprehensive resource to help schools maintain a healthy environment in school buildings by identifying, correcting, and preventing IAQ problems. Learn more about the *IAQ Tools for Schools* Program at [www.epa.gov/iaq/schools](http://www.epa.gov/iaq/schools).